



# Understanding Your GACE® Scores

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Georgia educator certification is governed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). The assessments required for educator certification are administered under the authority of the GaPSC by contract with Educational Testing Service (ETS). The intent of this publication is to explain the reporting and interpretation of scores for the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators® (GACE®) assessments that are required for Georgia educator certification.

## **APPLYING FOR GEORGIA EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION**

Once you pass the required assessments and meet all requirements for certification, **YOU MUST APPLY** using the General Procedures for Certification application. For information about applying for certification, please refer to the GaPSC website at **[www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com)**.

## **How Scores Are Reported**

Score reports for all assessments, except the Georgia Ethics, Paraprofessional, and Teacher Leadership assessments, are available via your testing account on the ETS GACE website at **[www.gace.ets.org](http://www.gace.ets.org)**. Scores for the Georgia Ethics and Teacher Leadership assessments are available via their respective registration systems. Paper score reports are issued for Paraprofessional.

ETS will retain your scores for 50 years from the test date. You should save or print a copy of your score report for your records. Score reports include the following types of information for most tests:

- The date of the test administration
- Your scaled score
- Passed/Not Passed determination for each subtest (if applicable) and whether the test was passed at the induction or professional level (for content assessments)
- Passed/Not Passed determination for the assessment
- Explanation of the two levels of passing standards (for content assessments)
- Number of scored questions
- Number of questions answered correctly
- Number of scored questions in each subarea (if applicable)
- Number of questions answered correctly in each subarea
- Number of scored questions in each objective (if applicable)
- Number of questions answered correctly in each objective (if applicable)

- Points possible for constructed-response questions (if your test includes a constructed-response section)
- Points earned for constructed-response questions (if applicable)
- Analysis of your performance

Your scores are automatically reported to you and the GaPSC. You may add up to three additional score recipients through your ETS GACE testing account as part of your test fee. The recipients you choose should be based on the selection you made as your reason for testing in your MyPSC account. More information about choosing score recipients and reasons for testing is in the *GACE Registration Bulletin* and on the GACE website.

**Note:** Your score report will show your highest score to date; however, any time you ask to have scores for an assessment sent to a recipient, all scores that you have on record for that assessment are included in the report.

### ***Scaled Scores***

Your score report shows your Passed/Not Passed status and passing level, if appropriate. Your scaled scores show how you performed on any subtest(s) of an assessment you have taken. Scaled scores are comparable across all versions of the same subtest of an assessment. However, scaled scores across different subtests are not necessarily comparable. The scaled score range and the minimum passing score are shown in this area of the score report.

All GACE test results, with the exception of the Assessment of Sign Communication-American Sign Language (ASC-ASL) and the Georgia Ethics and Teacher Leadership assessments, are reported as scaled scores on a scale of 100 to 300.

The total raw test score on a test is a combination of:

- the total number of scored questions answered correctly on the selected-response section of the test
- ratings received on any constructed-response questions as assigned by two independent raters

The total raw test score is then converted to the scaled score scale for reporting. Please note that for assessments composed of more than one test, you must pass all tests for that assessment to meet the certification requirements. Once you pass one test within an assessment composed of more than one test, you will not have to retake that part of the assessment again.

**Note:** Your test may include some questions that do not count toward your score. These are new questions that are being tried out in real test administrations in order to collect information about how they will perform under actual testing conditions.

## **Passing Scores**

The passing standards for the GACE assessments were established by the GaPSC with input from committees of Georgia educators and educator preparation faculty. The passing scaled score for each GACE assessment or subtest reflects the minimum level of content knowledge required to be successful as beginning educators or educational leaders in Georgia public schools.

### ***Content Assessments***

A passing score for any GACE content assessment can fall into one of two categories:

- 220 – passing at the induction level
- 250 – passing at the professional level

At this time, passing at either of these levels meets the Georgia Special Requirement to pass the content knowledge assessment(s) appropriate to the field of certification.

If you take a combined test and pass one subtest at the induction level and the other at the professional level, the entire assessment will only be considered passed at the induction level.

### ***Assessment of Sign Communication- American Sign Language (ASC-ASL)***

The ASC-ASL test is assigned ratings of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest score. The passing score is Level 3 or higher.

### ***Certificate Upgrade Assessments (Curriculum and Instruction and Instructional Technology)***

The certificate upgrade assessments do not have tiered passing standards. The passing score for the Curriculum and Instruction and Instructional Technology assessments is 250.

### ***Educational Leadership Assessment***

The Educational Leadership assessment does not have tiered passing standards. The passing score for the Educational Leadership assessment is 250.

### ***Georgia Ethics Assessments***

For the **Program Entry** level of the assessments, you receive a percentage correct and a status of complete or not complete for each end-of-module test. Although you do not receive an overall test score, you do receive an overall status of "Completed" or "Not Completed" for the assessment. You must complete all training modules and end-of-module tests to receive credit.

For the **Program Exit** level of the assessments, you receive a percentage correct and a status of completed or not completed for each end-of-module test and the summative test. Although you do not receive an overall test score, you do receive an overall status of "Passed" or "Not Passed" for the assessment.

## ***Paraprofessional and Program Admission Assessments***

The Paraprofessional and Program Admission assessments are considered entry-level assessments and do not have tiered passing standards. The passing score for both the Paraprofessional and Program Admission assessments is 250.

## ***Teacher Leadership Assessment***

Each of the six tasks in the Teacher Leadership assessment is scored on a 4-point rubric by two individual raters, making the possible score range for each task 2-8, or Nonscorable if, for any reason, the task cannot be scored. Candidates taking the Teacher Leadership assessment will receive total task scores (the total score from both raters for each task) and a combined score that is the summation of all of the total scores for all six tasks in the assessment.

In order to pass the Teacher Leadership assessment, you must submit a response and receive a valid score (non-zero) for each task. The total number of points possible for all six tasks combined is 48. You must receive a minimum of 31 total points to pass the assessment.

If you completed a state-approved Teacher Leadership program between Spring 2014 and Summer 2016, you received your certificate upgrade upon program completion and recommendation by your program provider. You have **two years** from completion before your certificate upgrade expires, during which time you must attempt the Teacher Leadership assessment to meet the assessment requirement of the certificate upgrade. **While passing is not a requirement, you must enter a scorable response for each task.** A scorable response is one that addresses the guiding prompts/questions, is not determined by certified raters to be off-topic or missing a required artifact, and receives a score greater than "0."

If you complete a state-approved Teacher Leadership program in the fall of 2016 or later, you will receive your certificate upgrade upon program completion and recommendation by your program provider. You have **one year** before your certificate upgrade expires, during which time you must pass the GACE Teacher Leadership assessment to meet the assessment requirement of the certificate upgrade.

## **Performance Analysis**

### ***Selected-Response Questions***

All score reports include a Detailed Performance Analysis of the selected-response questions with a breakdown of the data by Subareas and Objectives, if appropriate. On score reports for content assessments, you will see a graphic that shows Total Questions – the total number of questions in all the subareas of the assessment combined. Within this graphic will be an icon that shows how many questions you answered correctly out of the Total Questions.

Below, the Total Questions are broken out by Subareas and Objectives, and you can identify how many questions you answered correctly out of the total number of questions in each subarea. These counts are provided for informational purposes only. Individual subareas/objectives do not have passing scores.

To more fully understand your performance within specific areas covered by the test, refer to the list of subareas and objectives provided in the Study Companion for the assessment you took. Study Companions are available for download in the “Test Preparation Materials” section of the ETS GACE website at [www.gace.ets.org/prepare](http://www.gace.ets.org/prepare).

It is important to use caution when interpreting data reported by subarea and, especially, by objective. The reliability of data based on a small number of questions is generally insufficient to make meaningful interpretations. Subarea scores are provided only to show the number and variety of objectives represented in the total test and to show the number of correct answers used in calculating your total test score. Note that the number of scored questions within a given subarea or objective may vary across different versions of an assessment or subtest.

### ***Constructed-Response Questions***

Holistic scores are provided for the constructed-response questions in the tests shown in the following tables. The term “holistic score” typically refers to the score that the rater provides as an overall judgment of quality of your response, in accordance with the scoring guidelines. Each point on the holistic score scale represents the degree to which the required performance characteristics were demonstrated in your response(s).

<b>Tests for Which Holistic Scores are Provided</b>	<b>Thorough Knowledge</b>	<b>General Knowledge</b>	<b>Limited or No Knowledge</b>
Early Childhood Education (Essay)	6	5,4	3-0
English (Essay)	6	5,4	3-0
Middle Grades: Language Arts (Essay)	6	5,4	3-0
Program Admission: Writing (Essay)	12-10	9-6	5-1
Assessment of Sign Communication – American Sign Language	5 (Passing)	4, 3 (Passing)	2, 1
Teacher Leadership	8, 7	6, 5	4-1 or 0

If you receive a holistic score indicating that you demonstrated “Limited” or “No Knowledge” on a constructed-response component of a test in the above table, your score report will contain additional information indicating areas for improvement.

If you are required to pass the Teacher Leadership assessment and you did not pass, you are allowed to resubmit any task that received a score of 5 or lower or Nonscorable to attempt a higher score.

<b>Additional Tests for Which Holistic Scores are Provided</b>	<b>Thorough Knowledge</b>	<b>General Knowledge</b>	<b>Limited Knowledge</b>	<b>Little or No Knowledge</b>
Curriculum and Instruction	3	2	1	0
Educational Leadership	3	2	1	0
Instructional Technology	3	2	1	0

Some constructed-response questions in the Educational Leadership assessment may require you to listen to a situation and respond in writing. You will be permitted to replay the audio portion, if needed. An ETS-approved headset will be provided at the test center.

## **How Tests Are Scored**

### ***Selected-Response Questions***

Selected-response questions are scored by the computer immediately after the test is completed. Each selected-response question that is answered correctly earns one raw score point. The total raw score is the number of scored questions answered correctly on the entire test.

### ***Constructed-Response Questions***

Responses that are produced by the test taker (including those that are written/typed, spoken, or signed) are scored by education professionals who are experts in the content areas they are scoring. These individuals, called raters, are carefully trained and supervised to assure that they apply standardized scoring methods in a fair and accurate manner. The final score for any constructed response is never determined by a single rater.

All GACE assessments (with the exception of the ASC-ASL) utilize an independent double-scoring model for each constructed response. This model requires two raters to independently score each constructed response. With the exception of the Latin assessment, if the two scores disagree by more than 1 point, a third rater also rates the response. For Latin, if the two scores disagree by any number of points, a third rater also rates the response.

The ASC-ASL consists of a 20-minute videotaped interview. At least three raters, including a scoring leader, reach consensus on the single holistic score assigned to the entire interview.

In the Program Admission assessment, both the Argumentative Essay and the Source-based Essay are scored by a qualified rater and by e-rater<sup>®</sup>, a computerized program developed by ETS. This program computes a score based on data from hundreds of previously scored essays. If the two scores agree, they are added to become the final score for the essay. If they disagree by more than a certain amount, a second human rater scores the essay, and the scores that are in agreement are added to become the final score for the essay.

### ***Mixed-Format Tests Consisting of Selected-Response and Constructed-Response Questions***

The total raw score for tests that include both selected-response and constructed-response sections is a weighted sum of each section's raw score.

### ***Pretest Questions***

The total number of questions indicated on your score report is typically lower than the total number of questions on the test. Most tests that contain selected-response questions include embedded pretest questions, which are not used in calculating your score. Including pretest questions in the assessment allows ETS to

analyze actual test-taker performance on proposed new questions and determine whether to include them in future versions of the test.

## **Additional Information About Scoring and Score Reporting for the French, German, Latin, and Spanish assessments**

Each of these assessments contains both selected-response and constructed-response sections. Those subareas that are assessed through constructed-response questions are described in detail below. All other subareas are assessed through selected-response questions. For these subareas, the number of Total Questions equals the number of scored selected-response questions and the Number Correct equals the number of those questions that were answered correctly.

### ***French, German, and Spanish***

Test I of these assessments contains two written-response questions. Each response can earn as many as 3 points from each of its two raters. So, with 6 points possible for each response, the total number of raw score points possible for the two written-response questions is 12. In calculating the total test score, the raw score points earned from the three written-response questions are weighted based on their content contribution to the total test. It is the raw (unweighted) points that are shown as Total Questions and Number Correct for Test I on the score report.

Test II of these assessments contains two questions that require a spoken response. Each response can earn as many as 3 points from each of its two raters. So, with 6 points possible for each response, the total number of raw score points possible for the three spoken-response questions is 12. In calculating the total test score, the raw score points earned from these three questions are weighted based on their content contribution to the total test. It is the raw (unweighted) points that are shown as Total Questions and Number Correct for Test II on the score report.

### ***Latin***

The Latin assessment consists of 12 Pronunciation tasks that are scored. There are three types of pronunciation tasks, with four tasks of each type that are scored. A fifth task of each type is included in the test for pretesting purposes and is not scored.

- Each of the four **Word Pronunciation** responses can earn up to 1 raw score point from each of its two raters (for a total of 8 raw score points possible for the four tasks of this type).
- Each of the four **Phrase Pronunciation** responses can earn up to 2 raw score points from each of its two raters (for a total of 16 raw score points possible for the four tasks of this type).
- Each of the four **Sentence Pronunciation** responses can earn up to 3 raw score points from each of its two raters (for a total of 24 raw score points possible for the four tasks of this type).

The total number of raw score points possible for the 12 pronunciation tasks is 48. In calculating the total test score, the raw score points earned from the 12 pronunciation tasks receive less weight than the points earned from the selected-response questions. It is the raw (unweighted) points that are shown as Total Questions and Number Correct on score reports.

## **A Word of Caution**

Statistical adjustments for differences in difficulty make it possible to give the same interpretation to identical scores on different versions of the same test. For example, a score of 220 on the GACE Middle Grades Mathematics assessment reflects approximately the same level of knowledge, regardless of which version of that test was administered.

Scores between different tests are not interchangeable. A score of 220 on the GACE Middle Grades Science assessment, for example, does not necessarily reflect the same level of knowledge as a score of 220 on the GACE Middle Grades Social Studies assessment. While 220 is the passing score for both of the tests used in this example, the level of knowledge that must be demonstrated to receive that score may not be the same for both tests.

### ***Acceptance of Rules of Test Participation***

Prior to taking any GACE test, you were required to approve and accept the Rules of Test Participation, which explain how scores will be reported, reasons for score cancellation, and any rights and/or obligations test takers are responsible for in regard to the test administration.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about GACE Test Scores**

### **Q. How do I know if I passed?**

**A.** Your score report will indicate a "Passed" or "Not Passed" status, and if you are taking a GACE content assessment (this includes all GACE tests except the ASC-ASL, Educator Ethics, Paraprofessional, Program Admission, and Teacher Leadership assessments), it will also indicate whether you passed at the induction or professional level.

The passing score for both the Paraprofessional and Program Admission assessments is 250. The passing score for the ASC-ASL is Level 3 or higher. To pass the Teacher Leadership assessment, you must receive a valid score (non-zero) on each task and a minimum of 31 points. The passing score for all other GACE assessments at this time is 220. For more details, see "Passing Scores."

### **Q. How many questions do I need to get right to pass the test?**

**A.** There is no way to predict the exact number of correct answers needed to pass any given test. There are several versions of each test, and each version contains different questions. The questions on one version may be slightly more or less difficult than those on another version. To make all versions of a test comparable, conversion tables adjust for difficulty among versions. Therefore, the number of correct answers needed to pass one version of a given test might vary slightly from the number needed to pass another version. For tests that require constructed responses, there is not a specific number you need to get correct; your score will depend on how well you meet the requirements used in the scoring rubric for each question or task.



**Q. How long after the test are my scores reported?**

**A.** At the conclusion of your test, you will be able to view unofficial scores if your test consists only of selected-response questions, and you choose to report your scores. Unofficial scores are not available for tests that consist of both selected-response questions and constructed-response assignments. These are scored during a scoring session held immediately after the testing window. Scores for the Teacher Leadership assessment are reported approximately six weeks after the submission deadline date for your assessment.

If a score is reported as NS (No Score), further analysis must be done before scoring can be completed. It does not indicate a problem with your test and will not delay reporting of your scores. Unofficial test results are not acceptable substitutes for an official score report. Official score reports will become available by the published score reporting date unless otherwise noted. For more information on score reporting dates, including circumstances under which scores would be delayed, see **Score Reporting Dates** at [www.gace.ets.org/scores/get](http://www.gace.ets.org/scores/get).

**Q. Why is the minimum passing score higher on the Program Admission and Paraprofessional assessments than on the content assessments?**

**A.** The Program Admission and Paraprofessional assessments are considered entry-level assessments not suited for tiered passing standards. Thus, the higher score of 250 has been assigned for the passing score for these two assessments. The difficulty level of the Program Admission and Paraprofessional assessments have been scaled so that the level of knowledge needed to get a passing score of 250 on either of these tests is the same level of knowledge needed to get a passing score of 220 on a content assessment.

**Q. Do all of the questions on the test count toward my final score?**

**A.** Most tests with selected-response questions include some new questions that are being piloted in actual test administrations in order to collect information about how they will perform under actual testing conditions. These pilot test questions (also called “pretest questions”) will not count toward your score. For more information about these questions, see “Pretest Questions” on page 6 of this publication.

**Q. What does a score of zero (0) or Nonscorable for a constructed-response question indicate?**

**A.** A score of zero (0) or Nonscorable indicates that you received no points from either of the two raters for that response. This could be because the response fell into the “Low” category as defined in the pertinent scoring guide (which can be found in the Study Companion for the test you took) or because the response was blank, not in the target language, or off-topic.

**Q. Who receives my score information?**

**A.** Your test results are automatically sent to you and the GaPSC. You may also select up to three additional score recipients as part of your test fee. You should choose your additional score recipients based on your reason for testing in your MyPSC account. Your score report is for your information only; you should not submit it with your application for certification. Application for certification does not proceed automatically when the GaPSC receives your passing scores. For information about applying for certification, please refer to the GaPSC website at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com).

**Q. Why didn't I receive scores for all the tests I took on a particular day?**

**A.** Some tests, particularly those including constructed-response sections, take longer to score than others. Because of this, scores for tests taken on a single day may arrive at different times.

**Q. Can I have my test rescored?**

**A.** No. Due to the stringent score verification process, in which nationally adopted methods are used to validate scores, ETS does not provide rescoring services for the GACE assessments.

**Q. How do I register to retake a test if I did not pass?**

**A.** In most cases, if you are eligible to retake a test that you did not pass, you can register via the online registration system on the ETS GACE website at [www.gace.ets.org](http://www.gace.ets.org). You cannot retake a GACE test within 30 days of your test date. Be aware that the registration system will only allow you to register for a test date that is at least 30 days after the previous test date. Consult the *Registration Bulletin* and/or the website for test dates and registration procedures.

If you are required to pass the Teacher Leadership assessment and you did not pass, you may resubmit one or more tasks that received a total score of 5 or lower or Nonscorable. You may do so by following the steps listed in the Registration and Submission section of the Teacher Leadership website at [www.gace.ets.org/teacher\\_leadership/register](http://www.gace.ets.org/teacher_leadership/register).

**Q. If I take a combined assessment and only pass one of the subtests, do I have to retake both subtests to get a passing score?**

**A.** No. If you take a combined content assessment with two or more subtests and do not pass one of the subtests, you will only need to retake the single test you did not pass. Once you have achieved a passing score on both subtests, you will have passed the entire assessment.

If you take a combined assessment and pass one subtest at the induction level, and the other at the professional level, the entire assessment will only be considered passed at the induction level. You must retake the subtest that was passed at the induction level if you wish to attempt to get a higher score and pass the entire assessment at the professional level. (At this time, this is not required.)

**Q. What should I study to improve my score?**

- A.** The best preparation for taking any GACE assessment is the knowledge and experience acquired through training and preparation in a college, university, or alternative certification program. The detailed information on your score report may help you identify the specific content areas that offer the greatest opportunity to improve your score.

Free test preparation materials are available for download from the ETS GACE website at [www.gace.ets.org/prepare](http://www.gace.ets.org/prepare). Included in these materials are Study Companions for each test. Each Study Companion is designed to familiarize you with the content material to be tested, test question formats and other pertinent study resources. Also available are *Tests at A Glance* which give you a quick overview of the assessment.

**Q. Can I cancel my scores?**

- A.** At the end of a computer-delivered GACE test, you are given the option of reporting or canceling your scores.

If you choose to have your scores reported, they will become part of your record and will be reported to you, to the GaPSC, to your program provider (if applicable), and to any other score recipients you designated. Once you choose to report your scores, they cannot be canceled.

If you choose to cancel your scores, they will not be reported and they cannot be reinstated. You will not receive a refund for your test fees if you cancel your scores.